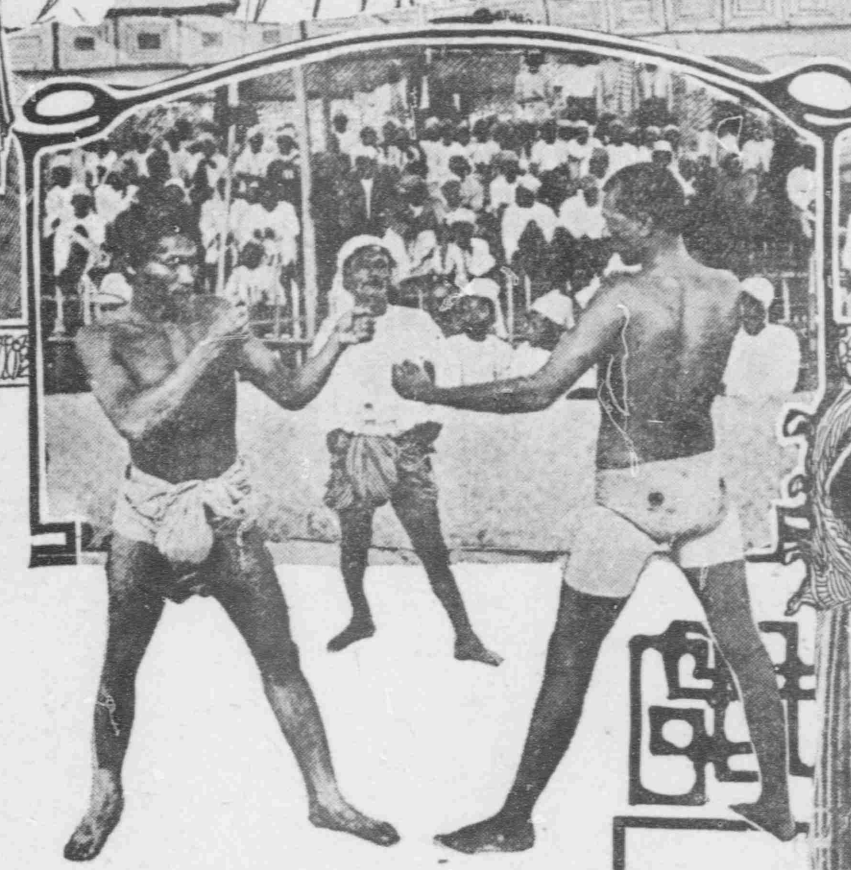


The MOST FANTASTIC FUNERAL PAGEANT Ever WITNESSED



angry cries of men fighting and quarreling, for now the culminating point is reached when the pyre is about to be lighted. On ordinary occasions a lucifer match would be sufficient, or even the fire obtained by the friction of a plug in the hollow bamboo, but these methods are too worldly and would fail to satisfy the sanctity and dignity of the illustrious Sadaw. The pyre had to be lighted by rockets, fired from a distance. Scores of these had been prepared weeks before, and carried round triumphantly in procession by the people who had made them, preceded by bands of music, singing and dancing of the province of the powder and the accuracy of the aim which will attain for them the glory of setting fire to the pyre.



PICTORIAL GUIDE

GIANT FUNERAL PYRE.
Shown at top. Built of tinzel and matting. Fired by rockets.

THE SACRED PEACOCK.
To the left. It sparkles with multi-colored mirrors.

GIANT ELEPHANT.
In the center. One hundred feet high, it bears the coffin.

BOXING, A CEREMONY.
Below. They kick each other.

LANCING GIRLS.
Beneath. Gelsas of Burma.

"Festivity" to Bury a Chief--He Does Not Die--It Is "Return of Great Glory."

leaping like great yellow tongues licking the topmost pinnacle of the spire. It was the beginning of the end. Roof after roof fell, setting fire to all the surrounding spires and offerings placed round the basement. The joints of the bamboos exploded with the noise of pistol shots, whilst the swaying crowd cheers each separate occurrence, and when finally the central spire fell with a hiss, a shout of triumph rose from the assembled multitude, suggesting anything but death and pious observances.

But there on earth they will tell you all is changeable, sad, and unreal, and one more death brings but nearer to the final rest of Nirvana. When the last smoldering embers have cooled, the monastic brethren search for any pieces of bone that may remain, and these are carefully gathered up and pounded down, mixed into a paste, and molded into an image of the Buddha, which is stored up in the monastery.

WASHINGTON TO BE MOST BEAUTIFUL

(Continued from Page Seven.)

sent stands first among American sculptors; and among architects and artists his criticisms have the authority of law.

"Mr. Olmstead bears the name identified with what is best in modern landscape architecture in the District of Columbia. He is the consulting landscape architect not only of the vast system of parks and boulevards which make up the metropolitan park system of Boston and its suburbs but also of large parks in various cities. To inherited taste he adds the highest training, both practical and theoretical.

"At the call of the professional brethren and at the request of this committee these men virtually put aside their large and profitable private work and for nearly a year devoted their time, their experience and their technical training to the service of the nation. These sacrifices they have made without pecuniary reward, and at a time in the professional careers of the majority of them when success and fame were already secure.

This is the commission whose work is now sought to be set at naught and whose suggestions in a matter of art may be thrown aside for those of a few sentimentalists who have suddenly conceived a desire to preserve two trees that have been discovered in the past month to be "historical."

Few White Men's Eyes Will Ever See So Extraordinary a Spectacle as This, the Obsequies of Buddhist Sadaw in Gorgeous East

By CAPTAIN FRANCIS THATCHER--LATE INDIAN STAFF CORPS

I HAVE been in places that the foot of white men has seldom trod, and I have looked upon things the like of which few men of my color have witnessed, but of all sights the glittering, unique, and fantastic pageants

of the purple and gorgeous East attending the funeral festivities of a Sadaw or Vicar General of the Buddhists in Burma is unparalleled throughout the world.

The word "festivities" is used advisedly, for the Buddhist monk

does not "die" as an ordinary individual. He "returns" to the highest heaven of the "nats," (1) therefore, a polygyee's (2) funeral is called a pohn-gyee-byan--the return of the great glory.

Even a junior member of the

Order of the Great Yellow Robe is cremated with great ceremony and state, but when a distinguished head of the order dies, such as the illustrious Sadaw, who recently passed away, and whose obsequies I describe here, it is a great event.

As tens of thousands of the faithful flocked in masses from every part of the empire to attend the great pageant, a white man here and there, drawn by the strange and fantastic, followed in their wake. Like them, a craving for the unusual sights of life drew me to the scene.

Long before the arrival of the first pilgrim the corpse of the Sadaw had been carefully washed by his chief supporters and monastic scholars (a group of whom are shown in the accompanying illustration surrounding the Sadaw), and the intestines taken out. The cavity of the stomach had been filled with ashes, sawdust, spices, and other substances likely to draw up the humors, and the skin was sewn together again. The body had been spread over with a thin layer of wax, and tightly swathed in white cloth from head to foot. The linen had been then varnished over with wood oil, and then every particle of the corpse covered with gold leaf. The body was now placed in a coffin made of a single log, roughly hollowed out, and with a very substantial lid. The lid was not fastened down for a considerable time, and a pipe led from the coffin into the ground to assist in drying the Sadaw's body, but this last was hardly necessary, for the old vicar general was already a withered up old man of great age at the time of his demise. The inner cof-

fin was then varnished and gilded all over.

Then an outer casket was prepared called a payoung heing, which was sumptuously gilded and paired in the panels, which were fringed with mosaic bits of lookingglass, colored glass and zinc. The paintings represented religious subjects, scenes from the life of Shin Gautama; his famous meetings with the old man, the sick, the dead, and the monk; his departure at night from the magnificent court of King Thoodawdana; his ascent to Tawadebuthan and the like. Rearing himself over the top of the sarcophagus stood the figure of an immense naga, (3) recalling the pious dragon chief that sheltered the Lord Buddha from a flood of rain by coiling seven times round his body and expanding its head as a covering.

This all being completed a substantial building of teak, open all round, was erected with the tapering ecclesiastical pava that rising over it; above this was fixed an immense white umbrella, deep white lace fringe, and round about hung a number of paintings representing the different robes of men--the swartthy Hindu, the oblique-eyed Chinaman--the Kareum with his pig tattooed on his back and the ghastly white-faced European with his dog and gun, all the paintings were grotesque and some simply horrible in their delineations of the torments of hell. Here and there in

this odd kind of mortuary chapel were Kehnays, gay tinsel pasteboard figures of men with birds' lower extremities.

Here the body lay in state and a constant stream of pilgrims from all parts of the country flocked to visit it to say their religious sentences and make offerings of fruit and flowers as they would at a paxoda. The lying in state lasted several months, during which time a continuous succession of festivities were celebrated with dances, plays, all kinds of games, such as the popular national one of Gohn-nyire toh pure Gohn or lion, meaning to jump and nyire is to deny or bluster. A more noisy and contentious game it would be difficult to find--and bosing, which as a very common institution but hardly carried out according to the Queensberry rules, for they kick with their bare feet and give violent upward knocks with the knee and have many other unorthodox devices for knocking one's opponent out, and all the while wild bursts of music fill the air. At the end of this period the final act of this strange ceremony or series of ceremonies takes place and the accompanying photographs will give some idea of the weird and fantastic magnificence of the scene which is mostly splashed out in vivid blotches of crimson and gold.

An enormous funeral pyre was constructed of bamboo matting, pasteboard, brightly painted, and covered with glittering tinzel. This was in the form of a seven-roofed spire representing the number of heavens of the net-dowahs. It was square up to the height of thirty or forty feet, where there was a platform on which was placed a cart of centopias resembling the gorgeous payoung-hoing or outer casket in construction and decoration. Above this towered some hundred feet higher the great bamboo canopy. Numerous other spires were arranged around the great central one, all glittering with gold and flashing with thousands of tiny mirrors and colored glasses, to be burnt along with it. No function of such importance as this would be complete without the two national emblems being represented--the peacock and the white elephant.

(1) Spirits.
(2) Buddhist monk.
(3) Dragon.

On one side of the funeral pyre with its gaily decorated seven-roofed spire towering toward the heavens stood an enormous white elephant on a mosaic teak platform--made of pasteboard painted white with a richly painted howdah perched on its back 100 feet in the air as it was certainly a curious spectacle and its companion, the peacock, on the other side with its glittering upstanding tail sparkling in its thousands of facets of multi-colored mirrors reflecting the flashing lights and myriads of falling sparks and bursting fire balls innumerable rockets from every side. Now comes

a part of the ceremonial which seemed to outsiders strangely absurd, but had a religious significance to the Burma and quite in keeping with his national characteristics. Some half a dozen stout rajan or coil ropes were fastened to the car and all the able-bodied men or as many as could hang on to the ropes seized them and commenced a frantic and uproarious tug-of-war. There was no selection of sides or numbers, and reinforcements were always ready to back up the side which was on the point of losing. This contest went on for hours. The explanation of this curious rite is this--it is considered of the greatest possible merit to drag a pohn-gyee's body to the funeral pyre and this Koothell falls to the share of those who win the tug-of-war.

Coffin Is Brought.

At last the coffin was brought to the pyre and hoisted up to its lofty platform, beneath which is stored a great quantity of combustible material: wood soaked in oil, pitch, and abundance of scented chips. Around the cars surged thousands in their bright colored silk garments and variegated head-cloths. Many wore horribly grotesque masks, representing the weirdest kind of devils--the whole scene being lighted by thousands of torches and colored fires--the shrieks of demoniacal laughter and shouts of derision, rent the air; snatches of chants and songs mingled with the